Docket No. ONDAT-015CUS

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5-6 have been amended. Claims 7-9 are new and Claims 1, 3 and 5-9 are currently pending.

Support for the feature of a hot plate being made of ceramic nitride or ceramic carbide can be found in the English specification at the first paragraph of page 5. Support for the feature of heat capacity of a casing can be found in page 10, lines 19-25 of the English specification.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 3, and 5-9 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Shinji (JP62169330) in view of Shaper et al (US 6,359,264) or Ushikoshi et al (US 5,683,606) and Fujikawa et al (US 5,595,606) or Moore et al (USP 5,683,518).

The claimed invention is a hot plate unit that includes a ceramic nitride or ceramic carbide hot plate and a casing. A hot plate made of ceramic nitride or ceramic carbide has a relatively high heat conductivity and uniform heat distribution. Due to the high heat conductivity, the hot plate is readily reheated by radiation heat of the casing. One technical object of the claimed invention is to prevent reheating of a hot plate having a relatively high heat conductivity. To solve said technical object, the claimed invention has a feature that the casing includes a plurality of second openings formed in the bottom.

The second openings formed in the bottom of the casing provide the following advantages:

(i) The second openings lower heat capacity of the bottom of the casing. This reduces re-heating of the hot plate by radiation heat of the bottom of the casing and improves cooling efficiency of the hot plate. Accordingly, the second openings can improve cooling efficiency of both the casing and the hot plate. None of the

references suggest forming a plurality of second openings in the bottom of a casing to lower heat capacity of the bottom of the casing.

(ii) The second openings improve discharging efficiency and circulation efficiency of cooling fluid. None of the references suggest forming a plurality of second openings in the bottom of a casing to improve discharging efficiency and circulation efficiency of cooling fluid.

None of the references taken alone or in combination, describe or suggest the concept of lowering the heat capacity of the bottom of a casing that supports a hot plate. Thus, the amended claims are believed to be novel and unobvious over all prior art of record.

Respectfully submitted,
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile to the United States Patent Office at (703) 872-9306 on October 11, 2004 and is addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Dated: October 11, 2004

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